



GOVERNOR OF MISSOURI

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July 14, 2015

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
United States Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

Due to severe and ongoing rainfall that began May 1, I am requesting that the USDA-Risk Management Agency (USDA-RMA) extend the grace period for producers to submit acreage reports by 30 days to assist farm families.

Over half of the counties in Missouri have experienced severe rainfall resulting in flash flooding and widespread ground saturation. Some counties have received rainfall of 9 inches or more in a 24 hour period, and the entire state has been in a continuing cycle of heavy rain and severe weather for over 60 days. This cycle is expected to continue for another 30 to 60 days. As a result of these unprecedented conditions, I declared a state of emergency on June 18.

Ongoing torrential rain and flooding this spring has delayed planting and will leave our producers with drastically reduced yields during a time when commodity prices are already severely depressed.

Missouri is in a unique position. To date, an estimated 1.5 million acres of soybeans have not been planted, and only approximately 40% of producers have reported their acreage to their Farm Service Agency (FSA). Based on these extreme conditions, many farmers only recently made planting decisions and thus have not completed their reporting. The deadline to submit acreage reports in Missouri is as early as July 15 for some producers, meaning that the majority of the 60% of farmers who have yet to report will not realistically be able to do so by the current deadline. Even if they were, the FSA and USDA-RMA would not have adequate time to certify the reports.

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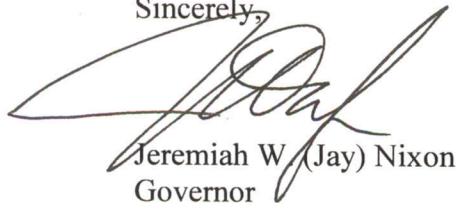
I understand that although a grace period extension is possible for acreage reports, science-based research in agronomics prevents an extension of actual planting deadlines. I realize USDA-RMA is unable to extend the late planting dates due to the financial impact such a decision would have on crop insurance companies selling policies; however, I respectfully request that USDA-RMA extend the grace period, giving producers additional time needed to accurately report acreage.

In Missouri, farmers are used to working with local FSA staff to certify their acreage for crop insurance purposes. While FSA certification is not required, it is often the practice. There is a genuine concern that information given by farmers directly to crop insurance agents will not be as accurate as utilizing the FSA certification process. Regardless, given the number of farmers affected by the wet conditions, there is no way the required acreage reports can be conveyed to crop insurance agents by tomorrow's deadline.

The requested extension will help ensure farmers receive proper and accurate insurance coverage, but will not create a financial burden on insurance providers who otherwise face the nearly impossible task of receiving a majority of producers' information in very little time.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and for your efforts in moving agriculture forward. We look forward to working with you to assist farm families, agribusiness owners and community leaders as we look towards more productive years.

Sincerely,



Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon
Governor